

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CG-00 DOTE-00 COA-02 EB-11 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2576
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EFIS, MX

SUBJ: U.S. FISHING VESSELS IN MEXICAN WATERS

SUMMARY: GOM HAS ASKED EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN CONTACTING FOUR
U.S. VESSELS SAID TO BE FISHING IN MEXICAN WATERS TO ASK THEM TO
LEAVE BEFORE IT BECOMES NECESSARY FOR MEXICAN NAVY TO TAKE ACTION.
END SUMMARY.

1. OFFICIAL OF MEXICAN UNDERSECRETARIAT FOR FISHERIES CALLED
FISHATT EVENING OF JULY 2 TO SAY THAT A PATROL BOAT OF HIS
DEPARTMENT HAD REPORTED FOUR U.S. SHRIMP VESSELS FISHING IN
MEXICAN WATERS IN THE VICINITY OF SOTO LA MARINA, WHICH IS ABOUT
150 MILES SOUTH OF BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS. THIS PORTION OF THE MEXICAN
COAST IS PRESENTLY CLOSED TO SHRIMPING AND THE PATROL BOAT WAS
OUT TO INSURE THAT THE CLOSURE WAS BEING OBSERVED BY MEXICAN
FISHERMEN. OFFICIAL SAID THAT GOM DID NOT WANT AN INCIDENT AND
ASKED FISHATT TO FIND SOME WAY OF CONTACTING THE U.S. VESSELS
AND ASKING THEM TO LEAVE THE AREA BEFORE THE MEXICAN NAVY GOT
INVOLVED.

2. CONTACTED USCG NEW ORLEANS AND TEXAS SHRIMP ASSOCIATION,
BROWNSVILLE, AND INFORMED THEM OF SITUATION. THEY ARE ATTEMPTING
CONTACT VESSELS AND WARN THEM THEY ARE IN DANGER OF BEING SEIZED.
VESSELS IDENTIFIED BY MEXICANS AS GRANADA, CAPT. HOMER, TEXAS
RANGER AND WORLD PEACE II.

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3. AS OF MORNING OF JULY 3 THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT MEXICAN NAVY WAS AWARE OF SITUATION, HOWEVER, IF U.S. VESSELS DO NOT LEAVE, GOM WILL CERTAINLY ASK THE NAVY TO TAKE ACTION.

4. GOM UNDERSECRETARIAT FOR FISHERIES IS APPARENTLY SINCERE IN DESIRE TO AVOID INCIDENTS INVOLVING U.S. FISHING VESSELS. IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEW, FOR U.S. VESSELS TO BE OPERATING DURING A CLOSED SEASON IN WHAT ARE CLEARLY THE TERRITORIAL WATERS OF MEXICO IS TO RISK EXPOSING THE UNITED STATES TO HEAVY CRITICISM IN MEXICO TO WHICH WE COULD HAVE NO READY RESPONSE. NOT ONLY IS THIS POSSIBLY DETRIMENTAL TO U.S.-MEXICAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, BUT COULD ALSO, IN OUR VIEW, HAVE PREJUDICIAL EFFECTS ON LOS NEGOTIATION NOW UNDER WAY IN CARACAS.

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